

Handwritten signature
FIVE THOUSAND A YEAR,⁹

A COMEDY,

IN THREE ACTS.

AS PERFORMED AT THE
THEATRE ROYAL, COVENT-GARDEN.

By THOMAS DIBDIN,
AUTHOR OF THE JEW AND DOCTOR, MOUTH OF THE
NILE, &c. &c.

DUBLIN:

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1799.

TO HIS
Excellency COUNT STARHEMBERG,
AMBASSADOR, &c.

FROM THE
IMPERIAL COURT.

MY LORD,

THE hospitality and condescension I have had the Honour to experience from your Excellency, induce me to lay at your feet a Production, which, if possessing no other recommendation, must certainly derive some value, from the opportunity it affords the Author to give this public testimony of grateful acknowledgment.

The Arts, my Lord, like Children, instinctively run to those who most delight in affording them protection; my Muse, though still in her infancy, may challenge the most perfect maturity of genius to express, adequate to her feelings the consideration and respect, with which I have the honour to be,

Your Excellency's,

Obedient, obliged,

And humble Servant,

THE AUTHOR.

ADVERTISEMENT.

TO the liberality of Mr. HARRIS, the talents and management of Mr. LEWIS, the friendship and ability of those Performers who kindly exerted themselves in representing the following Trifle on the Stage; the Author holds himself principally indebted for the very gratifying reception with which it has been honoured.

PRO-

PROLOGUE,

WRITTEN BY THE AUTHOR OF THE PLAY,

SPOKEN BY MR. MUNDEN.

THE Playhouse prepar'd, the Audience met,
The Critics all rang'd,—a terrible shew !
The Poet dismay'd—and now, who'll take a bett
On the chance, if in truth he has cause to be so :
Some folks may suppose he has little to fear
Who rests his defence on Five Thousand a Year ;
Yet we live in a land, where no rank or estate
Can sway to injustice the public opinion,
Where due praise is given to little and great
And the poor man is equal to fortune's first minion.
Besides the Bard's wrong—why—my friends you all know it,
Five Thousand a Year is too much for a Poet ;
Or if not, to avow it, the Author a goose is
For if in one year such a sum he produces :
Only think how he'll have to come down with the Clinkum,
When the Gemmen go round for Tax upon Income,
By the bye I came here at his humble request,
To speak you a Prologue, they're common at best,
And I think for my own part, 'twould sound quite as pretty
If my subject I dress'd in the form of a ditty !
So I'll speak to some tune, but on this sole condition,
I'll not sing one Stanza, without your permission.

S O N G.

The times are gone by when on floors next the sky
Cut off from roast Beef, Port, or Claret,
Poor Poets wou'd pine, and invoke all the Nine
To inspire attic wit in a garret.

Our Author declares, that a two pair of stairs
Was the height of his soaring ambition,
'Till the Doctor and Jew contriv'd 'twixt the two,
To lower in life his condition.

Now snug in first floor, he desires no more
Than to keep with decorum his station,
And Five Thousand a Year he offers you here,
For the favour of your approbation.

And by what I can find, he has made up his mind
To wait with due patience his meed ;
He'll swallow the pill, for he says, come what will,
He'll be damn'd if he does not succeed.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

George Fervid,	-	<i>Mr. Lewis.</i>
Frederick Fervid,	-	<i>Mr. Pope.</i>
Truepenny,	- -	<i>Mr. Waddy.</i>
Sir Matthew Maxim,		<i>Mr. Munden.</i>
Mr. Goulding,	-	<i>Mr. Murray.</i>
Henry Hastings,	-	<i>Mr. H. Johnstone.</i>
Paragraph,	- -	<i>Mr. Farley.</i>
Dick,	- - -	<i>Mr. Simmons.</i>
Officer,	- -	<i>Mr. Rees.</i>
Servant to Frederick,		<i>Mr. Curtis.</i>
Servants to Sir Matthew,		<i>Mess. Abbott & Wilde.</i>
Boy,	- -	<i>Master Webb.</i>
Lady Maxim,	-	<i>Mrs. Mattocks.</i>
Lady Julia,	-	<i>Mrs. Pope.</i>
Maria,	- -	<i>Miss Betterton.</i>
Aurelia,	- -	<i>Mrs. H. Johnstone.</i>

SCENE—*London.*

FIVE THOUSAND A YEAR.

A C T I.

SCENE I—*An Apartment at Frederick's Lodgings—Frederick and Truempenny discovered at a Table with Cash and Accounts.*

FREDERICK.

I AM satisfied, my good Friend, perfectly satisfied, and only wish now to know how I can make any thing like adequate amends for your honesty and perseverance in our affairs.

True. Honesty is the safest policy, and perseverance overcomes the greatest difficulties. So far they reward themselves; if your Brother and yourself, as the Children of an old and dear friend, are pleased with my service and affection, I am repaid.

Fred. And shall it be said, Sir, that a noble Estate recover'd by your Agency for two friendless Orphans, friendless but for you, shall yield no more than words to thank you with? No,—My brother, I am certain feels with me; you must share with us the affluence you have given—The Friend you mention, our dear Father, will look down with approbation on that gratitude, the spirit of which we have inhaled from his instructions.

True. So much haste to discharge an obligation, looks as you were weary of it. Give me your hand. The use to which you put your fortune will best prove your gratitude. When do you expect your brother?

Fred. Every hour—It is some time since we met, and I wish much to see the effect this pleasing reverse
of

of fortune will have on him—We were ever on terms of friendship the most sincere. Prosperity, I hope, will not break the band which adversity drew so closely.

True. 'Tis certainly in more danger than it was, you have now less interest in each others welfare, you have each no future pursuits but such as may enable you to pass your time agreeably, and when launch'd into the world in the sphere you have now a right to move in—it is impossible to say how far your opinions of those pursuits may differ.

Fred. The modes of our education have certainly been different, George has been assiduous in those studies which your liberality permitted him to pursue at College, with a view to make his fortune in the literary world—while I in the Counting-house of a Merchant have passed my time in calculations and commerce.

True. You have each been the true Sons of your Father as to application and integrity, but you have been out of the way of temptation, look'd on the world to be in a state of dependence, few, if any, had the inducement of interest to deceive you.—Beware therefore; the scene is changed, and you will now find professed friends in those who would formerly scarce deign to claim acquaintance; Patrons in those whose countenance is become unnecessary, and acquaintance all over the town.

Enter SERVANT.

Sir Matthew and Lady Maxim, Sir. *[Exit.]*

Fred. Exactly, my dear, Sir, as you have foreseen, Sir Matthew values himself on his independent integrity, and his wishes to be of service to the rising generation, his kindness to me has, however, never passed the bounds of promise—I have, indeed, been admitted to his parties, but as this is the first visit he ever honoured *me* with, he has doubtless heard of my success, and is come to wish me joy of it.

Enter

Enter SIR MATTHEW and LADY MAXIM.

Sir Matt. Ay, there, I told you so my Lady; there he is, more industrious than ever, Stewards, and papers, and Accounts. I'm glad to see it, I congratulate you my Friend. It's always a Maxim with me that providence in youth is the surest way to secure independence in old age.

Lady Maxim. Then my dear Sir Matthew, do preserve a little of your foresight against you grow old yourself. Mr. Frederick, I have the honour to be most exquisitely happy at hearing of your late acquisition. I am not a little flatter'd by the friendship with which you have hitherto honour'd our family, and we have done ourselves the pleasure of calling to say——

Sir Matt. It's my Maxim never to interrupt any body, so if you are busy, Sir, why so be it, or else, as my Lady observes, we called to say——

Lady Maxim. Now pray, Sir Matthew, permit me to speak. 'Tis excessively indecorous to disconcert a Lady in this manner, and with regard to Mr. Frederick, I have only to mention that——

Fred. Madam, your attentions do me honour, I am perfectly grateful to Sir Matthew and yourself, permit me to introduce Mr. Oliver Truepenny, a staunch friend of my deceased Father, and the generous instrument, by whose exertions his Children have unexpectedly become independent.

True. Your Father, young man, didn't like compliments. If these are your friends, I am glad to see them—if not, they won't care a great deal for me. [*Frederick and Lady Maxim retire up the stage.*]

Sir Matt. [*Aside.*] So, so—a warm old pur, I warrant him.—Sir, I like you, you speak with plainness and sincerity—it becomes you—I do so myself—never stoop—never truckle to another's opinion, so I think you are perfectly in the right.

True. Then, Sir, you and I don't agree. Independence of opinion, as well as of circumstances, is, certainly, the basis of human happiness; but if we
make

make a rule never to adopt the opinion of another, merely because it isn't our own, we shut the door on instruction, and produce obstinacy as the only excuse for willing ignorance.

Sir Matt. Admirable, I'll adopt that as my own opinion immediately; and I'm sure my Lady will agree with me in saying—Eh! where the devil is she? Eh! what Frederick, at your old tricks;—Talking soft nonsense—Well, well, you think my Lady a fine woman—We are of the same opinion exactly—An't we, my Lady.

Lady Maxim. Your opinions, Sir Matthew, have little to recommend them but their pliability—Your opinion of me was form'd on that of so many persons of real taste and penetration, that—

Sir Matt. Now, for my part, my Lady, if I may ever be allowed to be original in my opinions, I do think it is on this very point. Mr. Frederick, the purport of our visit was to invite you to dinner—Your friend too, we shall be proud to see, and, as I understand, your brother is expected, let us have him of the party by all means.

True. You will perhaps, have a large party, Sir Matthew?

Lady Maxim. O! by no means, Sir, there will be very few, just a friend or two and ourselves, Maria, Sir Matthew's daughter, is just come home from the country, and there will be Sir Solomon Single, Lady Julia, the rich Widow, and Sir Matthew's inseparable friend and companion, the facetious Mr. Quibble.

Fred. Sir Solomon I fancy is an oddity in his way?

Lady Maxim. The very epitome of opposition to the rest of the world, and so proud of his reputation that way, that he sleeps when others wake, rises when they sleep, goes booted to the Pit at the Opera, full dressed to the Upper Gallery at the Play House, and once for mere singularity went to a Masquerade in the character of a Milestone, nay he even boasts that his acquaintance are all singular, and professes to know a Poet without poverty, an honest Attorney, and
a Physi-

a Physician who isn't afraid to swallow his own prescriptions.

True Does your Ladyship suppose then, that no such characters exist?

Lady Maxim. Among Sir Solomon's intimates very likely, but in the world at large, I'm afraid—

Sir Matt. Now it's my maxim to be afraid of nothing, and as to Poets being poor, it's all nonsense—Didn't we see in the Newspaper that an Author got five hundred pounds last week for writing a play? Why, Sir, it equals the Philosopher's stone—What's your opinion? (*to Frederick.*)

Fred. My opinion, Sir, is of little weight: I presume however that genius was never recompensed by money, not but what Poet's must live as well as other folks—but to a mind possessing the real influence of the Muses, competence must include every blessing, and the bard in the midst of his labours looks less to pecuniary emolument, than to the sublime honour of improving his fellow creatures, the very hope of which can lift him from himself, and transform the idea of a Task to the highest pitch of mental gratification.

Sir Matt. That's my opinion exactly.

Fred. Every man of genius is of course a thinking man, and a moment's thought must convince him that he is never more answerable to Society, than when his sentiments are entrusted to the guidance of his pen, that the Wretch who would prostitute it against the dictates of his conscience, must sooner or later become the scorn of those whose praise he would obtain, while the benevolent Bard, who endeavours to reform an error, or exterminate an unmanly prejudice, will be justly rever'd by humanity, as its friend and benefactor.

Lady Maxim. Then you don't think we ought to laugh on the Stage, Mr. Frederick?

Fred. Quite the contrary, my Lady, satire, embitter'd by ridicule, is the most probable Reformer of Folly.

Sir Matt.

Sir Matt. As you say, it's best to laugh at the follies of the World:—for my part, I like a Play with a taking Title, and a number of comical tricks.—I wrote one myself once on the absurdity of modern dress. It was call'd "Heads and Tails," and its fate or salvation entirely depended on the toss up of a halfpenny.—But, my Lady, you have been rather smart upon Sir Solomon Single—What have you to say against my friend Quibble?

Lady Maxim. He! an eternal Punster, nothing can possibly escape him. He affronted one Friend who had sent him a leveret—by asking him if that was his own *hare* or a wig;—frighten'd another out of his garden, by saying there was a Sheriff's Officer behind him—when all the while he meant nothing but a bay leaf;—told a Painter that drawing pheasants was only making game?—sent old Lady Dimly, when she wanted a pair of spectacles, to see two Monopolizers put in the pillory: and actually has calf's head at his table three times a week, purely for the sake of saying he is obliged to provide brains for the rest of the Family.

True. Ha! ha! Well said, my Lady, I did think of declining your kind offer—but a Party like this may be a treat, and if you won't cut too many jokes upon a plain Country Gentleman, I'll accompany my Friend with pleasure.

Sir Matt. Thank you, Sir, when any man chuses to honour my house in the shape of a guest, it's my maxim ever to treat him as if he were the Master of it.—So come, my Lady, 'tis time we were at home—we shall expect you at five exactly.

Fred. Where Lady Maxim is the Hostess, there can be no doubt of punctuality in the Visitors.

Mr. Frederick.—Good morning, What elegance of expression! I declare I never perceived half this young man's accomplishments till this moment, I insist on your not stirring a step.—Ah! Well—there's no resisting real politeness—stand out of the way, Sir Matthew.
(Pushes Sir Matthew by.) [Exit, led by Frederick.

Sir Matt.

Sir Matt. Your Ladyship seems determin'd to push your politeness as far as it will go at any rate.

[*Exit.*]

True. (Solus) So, so! I fear my two young friends will reap little useful improvement from their introduction into high life. Frederick seems quite inclin'd to fall in with all their absurdities already.—My best hopes are in George—he is a good lad.—A lad of quick perception, and sound reasoning; and I have no doubt but he will be able not only to keep within the bounds of propriety himself—but to give his brother a lesson.

Re-enter FREDERICK.

Fred. My dear Sir, I was impatient to return to remove your wonder at my attentions to that Lady. You must know then, Sir, that I am in love, deeply in love with Sir Matthew's daughter. She is at the sole disposal of her parents, and my Lady is the entire governess in whatever relates to the whole family.

True. Thus one foible begets another—Because my Lady governs her husband you must become an hypocrite.

Fred. For a short time only, Sir, I hope—(*Knocking*)—Ah! my brother is doubtless arriv'd.

George—(without.) Up stairs is he? Very well.

True. 'Tis he indeed.

Enter GEORGE.

Ah! my dear Lad, how is it?—Your brother and I have been impatiently expecting you.

George. Give me each of you a hand—Believe me, fraternal affection and sincere gratitude, were never so predominant in the heart of man, than in mine at this moment—But I hate saying too much, I never do. It's a bad custom—Too many words make the sentiments of the heart appear common.

Fred. Well, George, we have to exchange congratulations on our present situation.

B

George.

George. You have mine with all my soul, but I confess to you, that I have found the coming unexpectedly into possession of Five Thousand a Year, a damn'd troublesome thing.

True. It's a trouble many would be glad to take off your hands.

George. Very likely, but only imagine the restraints I am suddenly under—the friends who us'd to shake me cordially by the hand, now approach me with a respectful bow.—The rich sparks who us'd to cut me at College, now insist on my being very intimate with them, those who would in a friendly way call me George, now can only pronounce the monosyllable, "Sir," while those, who in contempt, would style me, Mr. Fervid, now entitle me George, swear they always liked me, and that George is the honestest fellow in the universe.

True. And what does this lesson teach you?

George. That money is not quite so essential to happiness as I have sometimes thought it, and yet for five and twenty guineas, I bought one of the best bargains I ever had in my life.

Fred. What was that?

George. You remember poor Dick Summers, the Curate—He and I were chums at College.—We were neither of us rich, and made an agreement, that whoever had most money, shou'd always pay the other's reckoning. I hadn't seen him since he left College till to-day, when I met him under the conduct of a Sheriff's Officer; not having exactly learn'd how a man of Five Thousand a Year shou'd speak to a Bailiff, I accosted him rather too roughly it seems, for he not discovering my real consequence by my conversation, grew impertinent; I laid my cane across his shoulders, paid my friend's debt and costs, with five guineas for the activity of my cane, and pursued my journey, perfectly satisfied with the consequences of the adventure.

True. My dear George, it will be necessary you shou'd think a little of the danger such imprudent vivacity may expose you to—your fortune is a bait which all will catch at, and—

George.

George. I understand you perfectly; but I shall defeat them, I mean to convince the world, that it is possible for a young man to be rich, and wise at the same time, nor shall it be in the power of beauty, or play, or wine, or any fashionable attraction to shake my resolution.

Fred. Not even in the power of beauty.

George. What is beauty! my dear fellow—we all admire a pretty woman—but why? if she has a fine figure, a fine face, a fine eye, and a fine ankle, why, how the devil can we help admiring her.

Fred. Ha! ha! Well said George.

George. Nay, but these are beauties that will fade. The figure will bend to age—the face become wrinkled—the eye lose its lustre, and the ankle its shape. These are the reflections with which I shall arm myself at the sight of beauty, and as for the inferior temptations of play or Bacchanalian intoxication, I have only to think of a headache in perspective, or the loss of that fortune I have just attained, to deter me from seduction.

True. But George, you wrong the ladies, to take from them all attraction—are there not such things as minds as well as bodies.

George. Certainly, Sir, and that is the reason why mere outside shall not captivate me. 'Tis the mind for which I will seek, and I shall convince you.—

Fred. Be not too hasty.—Your ordeal will quickly arrive, for we are about to dine amidst a blaze of beauty.

True. And then George, if you shou'd break your resolution.

George. You may laugh at me, and welcome; the world however will excuse it; for as matters go, the faults must be great indeed, which are not thought excusable in a man of Five Thousand a Year.

[*Exeunt.*]

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

B 2

ACT

ACT II.

SCENE I—*A Library at Sir Matthew's.—
A Table with Newspapers on it.*

Enter JULIA and MARIA.

Maria.

MY dear friend, I tell you, you must not set your cap at George Fervid; he has declared war against all the passions, and particularly against love.

Julia. And yet I'll engage to go a great way toward making a total change in the absurd system he has adopted.

Maria. Would you so far forget the delicacy of your sex as to make approaches?

Julia. By no means—the woman who forgets the respect due to her own sex, will be miserably mistaken if she looks for any from the men—No, no, take my word for it, timidity and reserve are the most effective weapons in our possession.

Maria. But timidity and reserve are totally inconsistent with design. To make use of them as a decoy is to change their nature, and borrow the names of Virtue to embellish the lures of a Coquette.

Julia. I thank you for both the inference and application. You my dear Maria, are a good girl, a very good girl; but you cannot lay your hand upon your heart and say, you never acted without design in what regards your affection for Frederick.

Maria. I do not exactly comprehend you, Madam.

Julia.

Julia. No! what then, perhaps, you never affected to be displeased with the tenderness of his professions when your little heart was filled with pleasure and satisfaction; or smiled with affected contempt and indifference when it was ready to break at seeing his attentions for a moment transferred to another.

Maria. So far from playing the hypocrite, I have too often given him sufficient reason to suppose, that as a point of disinterested honour seemed to deter him from a declaration of affection but ill concealed, I was by no means unwilling to give his eyes credit for all his tongue refused to confirm me in.

Julia. Very well, my dear; and so the cautious Maria, who has been warning me against the least departure from policy and reserve, has herself given proofs of affection to a man, whose eyes alone are her only vouchers for a return of it.

Enter SIR MATTHEW and LADY MAXIM.

Sir Matt. My Lady, I tell you it is of no consequence of what family a man is. Money is my maxim, and without it ancestry is like—

Lady Maxim. Like what, Sir Matthew.

Sir Matt. Like a woman's tongue, makes a great clatter without any meaning.

Lady Maxim. In former ages, Sir Matthew, birth was more esteemed, and people of birth endeavoured to conduct themselves with the dignity due to their stations. The young women secluded themselves from the vulgar gaze, improved their minds, and governed their appetites by the strictest delicacy.

Sir Matt. Particularly at breakfast, when they walked down a dish of rump steaks with a jorum of Windsor ale.

MARIA and JULIA come forward.

Lady Maxim. For Heaven's sake, girls, come and assist my arguments. We are disputing of the comparative value of birth and money.

Sir Matt. I say, a prudent girl should marry where most of the ready is to be had, and her husband's genealogy should be found in his rent roll.

Lady Maxim. Heaven's! what degeneracy! Oh, that I had liv'd three centuries ago!

Sir Matt. I wish you had, with all my soul.—
(*Aside.*) Now, I say, no one in their sober senses can side with my Lady. What do you think, Maria?

Maria. If I may be allowed to hazard a distinction, I think, Sir, that neither money or descent shou'd have precedence of real merit.

Enter TRUEPENNY.

True. There, there, this comes of forming resolutions. There's my poor boy, George, who has made up his mind neither to drink, quarrel, fall in love, or be guilty of any other folly, is in a fair way to be caught in every one of them.

Sir Matt. Indeed! How so?

True. He has already found wine two powerful for reason, and having once forsaken Minerva for Bacchus, there's no knowing what Deity he'll acknowledge next.

Enter FREDERICK and GEORGE.

Fred. Come, come Brother, you must now relinquish one of your resolutions, or at least, the power to keep it. Wine you see has got the upper hand of your determination.

George. I beg pardon—I beg the Ladies pardon in particular. I mean to give you some proofs that I'm not overcome—

(*FREDERICK crosses over to MARIA. They go up the Stage.*)

Now, my dear Ladies, just permit me to shew you, that I am at least clear enough in my understanding to read a Column of this Paper. (*Taking up from the Table*)—(*Reads*) “From the Hibernian
“ Chronicle,

“ Chronicle, Lost where it was dropt, an Empty
 “ Bag, with a Cheese in it, mark’d with Two Letters that are quite worn out—(*Sits down to Read.*)

[*They Exit gradually.*]

True. Don’t be apprehensive—he’ll not read three lines.—(*They steal off.*)

George. Now don’t interrupt me, for I’ve got into a “*Case of real Distress,*” Clergyman of the Church of England—want—sickness, inability to attend, particulars known by enquiring at the Printer of this “*Paper* ; enquire for A. Z.” What a comprehensive address—it includes the whole alphabet—Ladies, I’m sure you’ll all subscribe, there’s my Ten Pounds, and I’ll be the bearer of the whole amount. Stay, I’ll write down the address for fear I shou’d forget it—Eh! what, all gone—how hard hearted is this! would you turn your backs on a case of real distress, when—(*Reads*) “*The smallest donations would be thankfully received.*—Oh dear—(*Yawns*) This famous old port of Sir Matthews makes one confounded sleepy—(*Dozes.*)

Enter a SERVANT.

Servant. My Lady, Sir, wishes to know if you wou’dn’t chuse some coffee.

George.—(*Half asleep.*) Enquire of A. Z.

Servant. My Lady expects you to coffee, Sir.

George. Tell her, I expect ten pounds at least. We must do something handsome for the poor Parson.—(*Falls back asleep.*)

Servant. Poor Gentleman! this sudden turn of fortune has had an effect on him—Well, there’s no knowing how soon it might be one’s own case.

[*Exit.*]

Enter TRUPPENNY.

True. So! the self-elected Hero, who bid defiance to every allurements of this world, has immediately fallen a victim to the most degrading. What! his money already thought so little of, as to be as
 the

the discretion of the servants?—Enquire of A. Z.
(Reads the Card.) Some borrowing scheme, perhaps on foot—He has hardly been gaming already—A. Z.—Let's see, *(Looks at the Newspaper)* "Case of real Distress"—No, no, I have done him wrong—I'll take care of this address myself, and something may be done here to punish his inconsistency, Eh!—What have we here! "Whoever will restore the said watch to Z. A. at the Printing Office of this Paper, shall receive two guineas reward, and no questions ask'd." There's very little difference between A. Z. and Z. A. so I'll take the liberty to change this card.—*(Writes and places another Card)*, and for fear of accidents take away the Paper, I'll apprise his Brother of this, who shall unobserv'd, watch the event, while I seek this distressed Clergyman, nor shall I think the day in which I alleviate the Misfortunes of an old man, and make a young one sensible of an error, the least pleasurable of my existence. [Exit.]

The Scene closes.

SCENE II.—*Another Apartment.*

Enter Lady MAXIM and MARIA.

Lady Maxim. Upon my word, young Lady, you have paid very little attention to the influence I ought to have over you. You are in Love, forsooth, and want to persuade, Mr. Frederick Fervid that he is in Love too—I tell you, Child, I am perfectly assured of you.

Maria. But my dear Madam.

Lady Maxim. There, you are not only guilty of unpardonable weakness, but you are ready to defend it.

it—it is always so—If ever I offer, or attempt to offer the least advice, it is interrupted, and prevented by your objections, you are grown quite a Character—perfectly remarkable for permitting no one to say a syllable but yourself.

Enter Sir MATTHEW.

Sir Matt. Bless me, my Lady, what's the matter? I came with a proposal, which I thought would afford you pleasure, Frederick has declared what he calls a long smother'd Passion for Maria, and as it's a maxim with me never to deny what I feel a pleasure in granting, why I have not only given my my most hearty assent but engaged for your Ladyship's into the bargain.

Lady Maxim. Then, Sir, you have made an Engagement which I shall break.

Maria. Surely! Madam, it is very hard not even to let me know why I am all at once the object of your displeasure.

Lady Maxim. When you have read this letter, Sir Matthew, if you do not acquit me of severity, I'll resign every atom of penetration for the future.

Sir Matt. (Reads).—" Eh!—Why zounds, my Lady, this is bad indeed, but the girl's to be pitied, not blamed—'tis no fault of her's if Frederick is a rascal.—Here Child, only look here (*gives her the Letter.*)—Come, come, my Lady, the poor girl wants consolation more than anger, you'd have been cross'd in love yourself, had I been half so cruel as you are.

Lady Maxim. Well, Miss, what are your sentiments now?

Maria. That this is a wretched forgery. Frederick guilty of seduction, the daughter of his friend too.—A Clergyman left in distress—Besides 'tis easy first to ascertain the truth, were Sir Matthew to see the Gentleman, it would be doing justice to us all.

Lady

Lady Maxim. And would you condescend to enquire into an affair so evident? No, Miss, I'll prevent such shameful degradation. Prepare for seclusion and the country, and leave me to punish the perfidious Man. Come, Sir Matthew. [Exit.

Sir Matthew. My your Maria! I do think now, this must be all a confounded mistake, tho' it's a maxim with me never to contradict, my Lady; yet in this instance we may be too hasty in obeying her commands—therefore, if she had said, I—

Lady Maxim (Returns.) Sir Matthew, I heard my name, what were you saying in opposition to my Orders?

Sir Matt. I only observ'd, my Lady, that it was impossible to be too hasty in obeying your Commands.

Lady Maxim. To be sure—So come along, Sir Matthew, should we meet the faithless man, I may need your protection. [Exit,

Sir Matt. I am sure one of your own looks is sufficient to protect you from the whole sex put together. [Exit,

Maria. Can it be possible, that Frederick, is the man here meant.—O no! And yet how positive the style, either He, or the Writer of this cruel Letter must be a villain most abandon'd—(Reads) “Sir Matthew,—If you have the least regard for the happiness of your family, do not let Frederick Fervid become a part of it, he has already destroy'd the happiness of a Father, and his Child,—that Father is the writer of this.—Reduc'd to the necessity of a public application for relief, what amends can he make to my wounded feelings, you will at least owe me some thanks for this intelligence; I only beg in return an interview to make good my assertions.—J. GOULDING.”—I will myself see this Mr. Goulding, and prevail on Julia to accompany me.—Shou'd it be true, and the sufferings of Frederick's victim equal to my present feelings;
the

the Author of them can scarce 'ever make atonement.

[Exit.

SCENE III.—*A Counting House or Office at Paragraph's.*

Paragraph discovered directing his Devils.

Paragraph. Here, Dick, do you go to the Herald Office with this advertisement—Speak to the Oracle as you go along; collect what you can from the Telegraph, and get all the news of the Times.

Dick. Sir, I have been from the Star, to the Sun already, and there's hardly any thing worth looking at.

Paragraph. Great scarcity of news indeed—No keeping up a Weekly Paper now, from the information of the Daily's. I remember when materials were to be had at all corners.

Dick. Aye, Sir, those were busy times, when I used to get all the Paragraphs out of the World, and then go to the devil for more.

Paragraph. Aye, aye, but the World's at an end, and the Devil could not stand it. Let's see what's in the Order Book—Twelve places wanted—Five Hundred Pounds ready to be lent—A Wife advertised for—Two partnerships dissolved—Three Lottery Schemes—Nine Quack Medicines, and a Caution to the Public.

Dick. Then, Sir, here's "Fifty Pounds Reward"—"Left in a Hackney Coach"—"An Elephant arrived from the East Indies"—and all these to be sold by Auction.—(Giving Papers at each Title.)

Enter

Enter GEORGE FERVID.

George. Harkyee, Sir,—Tell your Master, I wish to speak with Z. A. (*looking at the card*) Z. A.—Why I have been dreaming of A. Z. 'My very hand too seems disguised. But wine reverses every thing—and there is not a Letter in the whole Four and Twenty, but it can render unintelligible.

Paragraph. Z. A. Let me see; that's the Gentleman, who was in the Sun to-day.

George. Sir, I have not been in the Sun, and damme, a Man of Five Thousand a Year can't even get drunk, but it is immediately known at every News Office in Town.—(*Aside.*)

Paragraph.—(*Looks at the Book.*) Sir, I ask pardon, I see now—please to step into the next room, and I'll wait on you immediately.

[*Exit George.*

Something in the Reward way here, I see—Dick, go fetch a Constable, and the Gentleman who has lost his Watch, and shew them into the back Parlour—Run—Fly.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene changes to a Parlour.

Enter GEORGE.

George. 'Twas certainly very foolish, to break so soon a resolution I had so firmly made—To be overcome with Wine—'was very wrong indeed.

Paragraph Enters. But if ever I get into such a scrape again.

Paragraph. Poor fellow, he seems very sorry—It's pity too—that such a smart young man should—

George. Well, Sir, are you at leisure? (*Paragraph bows*) We have so few opportunities of doing good in this world, that when they do occur, 'twere a pity to let them escape. I come on the part of Z. A.—
I should

I should wish to see him, having something in my pocket to offer, which might be worth his acceptance.

Paragraph. Sir, you are acting as properly as a young man in your situation can possibly do. I commend you for it, and can only say, I am sorry there was ever any necessity for it at all.

George. Why as to that, Sir, there's no knowing how a Man's situation in life may alter—had I seen the Advertisement yesterday, it wou'd not have been in my power to have call'd.

Paragraph. Why it was only last night you know the occasion for it happen'd.

George. You are acquainted with the party perhaps.

Paragraph. No, I wasn't at home when he call'd with the Advertisement.

George. He call—why poor fellow; I understand he can hardly stir out of his bed.

Paragraph. (aside)—Dear, dear, I dare say he made resistance, and this wicked rogue knock'd him down.

George. I shall however expect some testimonial of his Character, and as I am referred to you, I shall of course wish to be inform'd of his real claims on the compassion of the Public.

Paragraph. Sir!

George. I must have evidence of his being a good man, before I do the needful.

Paragraph. Good Man, why he's as good as the Bank—so hand over the watch, and here's the two guineas immediately.

George. Answer me, Sir—do you know who I am?

Paragraph. No, but I dare say, the people in Bow-street do?

George. D—n Bow-street, and every body belonging to it. Sir, my name is George Fervid—George Fervid, Esquire, who has unexpectedly come into possession of Five Thousand a Year, and who as he wishes to render his wealth serviceable to his Fellow-subjects,

subjects, as well as Himself, would not only employ it in helping the Poor—but in—ah! damme, it's well for you, that one of my resolutions, was; never to put myself in a Passion—or—I'd kick you.—damme, I'd kick you.—(*Kicks him and pulls his nose all the while in a great rage.*)

Paragraph. Here, Murder! help!—Robbery!

Enter DICK with CONSTABLES.

There, there; Gentlemen I charge you with that Villain. He has robb'd a Gentleman of his Watch—come here upon false pretences, and kick'd me round my own parlour.

Dick. Sir, the Gentleman will see the young man at his examination.

George. Why really good folks you may think this mighty entertaining; but if you had an idea who it really was you are treating in this sort of way.

Constable. Why I do know you—It's the very man who half kill'd the Sheriff's Officer, and rescued the curate yesterday, I was by, and saw the fool take five guineas to make it up again.

Paragraph. There! there!—I said you was known at Bow-street.

Constable. An old offender at Covent-garden, I'll be bound for it, so come along—only be civil, for you hav'n't got such a green horn as the Bailiff to deal with.

George. I'll accompany you for the sake of punishing you all; and though I had resolved never to go to Law, I'll make you all pay swinging damages, and then give every halfpenny of the money to the poor Clergyman who has been the innocent cause of the whole transaction.

[*Exit with the Officers.*]

Paragraph. You get damages—why hark ye—if you wasn't in the hands of Justice, I'd give you such a drubbing—I'd—but no matter—You Dick, bid Peter Pickup, the Paragraph Writer, come to me.
It

It shall go all into the evening News. Let's see—he beat a Curate, rescued a Bailiff, stole a Watch—pass'd for a 'Squire, and pull'd the Nose of a Printer—But I'll be even with him—I'll disgrace him for ever—his Name shall appear in my Paper directly.

[Exit.]

SCENE IV.—*A Poor Apartment.*

GOULDING and TRUEPENNY discovered.

True. Go on, Sir, go on, tho' your narrative breaks my heart—how little real penetration falls to the lot of us short sighted mortals!—If the dearest friend I have had told what you have done of Frederick Fervid, I would have disbelieved him; but the proofs you bring are unanswerable.

Goulding. Alas! Sir; it is far from my wish to paint humanity in sombre colours; but here my child, betrayed, torn from my home, and I, in seeking her, reduc'd so low, calls for more forbearance than I can boast my own, to desist from execrating the villain who has been the cause.

True. How long since Frederick and your daughter left you?

Goulding. Within these few weeks. His sudden accession of property accounts for his change of mind. My child was no longer thought his equal, and I have heard he already addresses the daughter of a Baronet.—My heart sunk at the intelligence—a fever ensued, and during the delirium it occasioned, my landlord, fearful of being a loser, for his own advantage advertised the story which brought you here.

Enter JULIA and MARIA.

True. Ah! my good ladies, it is with pain I confirm to you, that Frederick is a villain. He little thinks how well we are acquainted with what he has hitherto so carefully conceal'd. I have been his friend, I was the friend of his father, and to my exertions he owes his present all. But in proportion to the warmth of my regard for a man, I thought worthy of it, I can feel detestation for the villain who calls a blush into my cheeks for having ever thought him otherwise.

Maria. How wretchedly depraved must the principles of that man be, who builds his pleasures only on the ruin of those, to whose confidence and affection he is indebted for them.—Be comforted, good Sir, my regret at his loss is more than compensated by the hope that he may yet make you and your daughter amends. It only remains with us to seek the means of bringing him to a sense of his duty.

Julia. Where is he, Sir, at present.!

True. He followed his brother, on his leaving Sir Matthew's, and when he has seen the event of a little frolick which, before I heard this business, I had planned, he is to meet us here, but the time wears, he has perhaps discovered whose retreat this is, and will not come.

Julia. Has he your daughter yet in his power.

Goulding. If not, she may be in still worse hands, I wrote to her, entreated, pray'd that she wou'd return to save a father's life.—I promised her forgiveness and oblivion for all the past, would she but leave the vile betrayer of her honour, and bless a father once more with her presence. Her heart I am sure is good—Heaven will avenge me on him whose infamy perverted it.

Julia. Maria, a thought has struck me—there can be no impropriety in my endeavouring, through the medium of his brother George, to obtain intelligence.

Shou'd

Shou'd you, or our friend here apply to him, it wou'd be to little purpose—your agitation wou'd betray you; and to him, Frederick would act, in this instance, with reserve—Let me conduct you to Sir Matthew's—I'll fend for George there, and——

Fred.—(*Speaks without.*) Do you go where I've already told you my brother is, I'll wait your coming here.

Maria. Hark! Frederick's voice—let us retire a moment—This way—any way to avoid him.

Aurelia (*Speaks without.*) Oh! Sir, for pity's sake.

Goulding. My daughter's voice! Is she then with him? O let me fly to rescue her from shame, to tear her from an impious villain's arms, and bring her back to virtue! Ah! my weak frame sinks under its own energies, affliction, anger, and parental love, fight in my bosom, my head runs round—Aurelia! Oh! my child—He tears her from me; Villain restore her—She is my daughter.—(*Falls on a Settee.*)

They run to him.

The Scene changes to another Apartment.

FREDERICK enters leading AURELIA.

Fred. (*as he enters.*) D'ye hear, let no soul approach this room till I call. Nay, droop not Lady, my errand here, before I met you, was to join my friends in rendering assistance to your Father, how much more will he bless me as his better angel, when I restore him such a treasure.

Aurelia. Cou'd you conceive the terror of my mind at the bare thought of seeing him—Ah! Sir, is there a punishment for those who err, more humbling, more heart-rending than to meet the steady eye of virtuous indignation.—I never can endure it. He will weep too—an old man's tears will join to pierce my soul—those eyes which oft have sparkled with delight to welcome me, after an hour's absence, will

overflow with anguish at beholding the wretch who dar'd to stab a Father's peace.

Fred. Your return will soften him to pity. In you restored he will forget his griefs—He will forgive.

Aurelia. Forgive me—yes, he will.—I know he will forgive. Was he a stern relentless parent, I shou'd less fear his anger; but 'tis his goodness wounds me. Every word—each look of kindness must speak in daggers to a heart, the more debas'd to wrong such confidence.

Fred. Shall I conduct you to him, or shall I follow my unthinking friend, and bring him.

Aurelia. Oh, no! let him no more prophane the roof that shields my Father. If penitence be due from me, how much from him who could repay benevolence with ruin—indeed, Sir, I have these three days eluded his pursuit.—'Twas but this hour I learn'd where my poor father was, our meeting here was accident; you have protected me from him, do not then leave me, till I am once more shelter'd with a Father. He will thank you, and though I know not who has done me service, I will for ever bless your memory.

Fred. My name, Madam, is——

True. (*without.*) I insist on the door being open'd—I will see him. (*Enters with Julia.*) By heaven 'tis all as we suspected. Miss Goulding I Presume. That Lady will conduct you to your Father, nay, come, don't weep. The blame is less with you than with the scoundrel who cou'd wrong such sweetness; your father is prepar'd to pardon every thing.

JULIA leads her off.—FREDERICK attempts to follow:

TRUEPENNY stops him.

True. Nay, stop young man—you and I have a little point to settle first.

Fred. If you mean relative to my brother, Sir, I have sent a friend to see for him; my accidental meeting

meeting with Miss Goulding prevented me from going myself.

True. And how can you dare to name that Lady without a blush; but I have the writings of your estate so far in my power, that I can and will oblige you to do justice. You shall marry her to-morrow—you shall settle half your fortune on her—you shall ask pardon of her father—of herself—of Maria Maxim—of me—and of every person of common honesty whom you have dar'd to impose on—and when you have made her all the amends, which marriage and money can accomplish, the sooner you hang yourself, and leave her to enjoy it the better.

Fred. By all that's good, Sir!—

True. I won't suffer you to say a word in your defence, such a conduct is unpardonable—had you been, to appearance, a wild dashing dog, I should have been upon my guard, and endeavour'd to have curb'd your irregularities by caution and restraint;—but you have deceived every body, even me, who was never deceiv'd before—don't speak—no excuse will answer the purpose. I will neither hear of you—speak to you—or look at you—till you are honestly married, and your injur'd wife accompanies you in requesting my forgiveness. [Exit.]

Fred. Why this is the most extraordinary adventure I ever met with—a Lady entreats me to protect her entrance into this house, from a particular friend of mine, who insists upon following her.—I find her to be daughter to the man whose advertisement had excited our compassion; and in return for my care and solicitude, I am treated as her greatest enemy. If Lady Julia and Maria, join in the infatuation, I am in a hopeful way it shou'd seem.

Enter MARIA and JULIA,

Permit me ladies for a moment—

Julia. Nothing you can urge will be of any consequence; to me you need no justification, and to this Lady it is a matter of most perfect indifference.

Fred.

Fred. There is some excuse for the impatient temper of an old man ; but from you I expect——

Maria. An endeavour at extenuation, is the only circumstance that can increase the cruelty of your conduct. I thank heaven, I have timely escap'd your hypocrisy. I now see while Lady Maxim was your enemy, and must give her credit for penetration where I thought her guilty of ill-nature.

Fred. Madam, if you refuse to hear——

Julia. The only regret I feel is, that to replace her reputation the girl must marry you ; the punishment which shou'd be yours is consequently transferred to her ; while you, for the seduction of an innocent girl become possessed of a valuable wife.

Fred. Shall I be permitted to speak, or not ?

Maria. As you please, Sir, 'tis a matter of so little import, that——

Fred. Why then, may I perish, if I so far degrade myself as to attempt a justification—you have insulted my honour, and my love—you have refused me the common justice of speaking in my cause, and opposing facts to credulous suspicions.—Nay, Madam, it is my turn now ; and whoever has dar'd to slander me in your opinion, is less culpable than you in so fondly giving credit to aspersions which I have not the least wish to remove ; had you heard me, or the evidence of Miss Goulding, you would have blush'd for your easy determination against one, to whom your good or ill opinion is now become totally indifferent.

[Exit.

Maria. Good heavens ! if I was not so certain of his falsehood that nothing can justify him, I shou'd, from his manner, think him innocent.

Julia. No wonder he made Miss Goulding the dupe of his artifices, in my whole life I never beheld such impudent assurance.

Maria. He *appeal'd* to Miss Goulding—'tis easy to enquire ; but why do I concern myself for such an ingrate, his justification is of no consequence to me—it wou'd now give me as little satisfaction as his falsehood

hood gives me concern, and on that account, I assure you, my dear Julia, I am so little chagrined, that—cruel inhuman man, I shall never be happy again as long as I live. *(sob violently.)*

Julia. Why now this is childish in the extreme—he does not merit this consideration.—Dry your tears, Miss Goulding is here—'twould be doubly painful for her to guess the cause of your uneasiness.

(MARIA turns up the stage.)

Enter AURELIA.

Aurelia. The honour you have done my dear Father and myself, can never be repaid. He too, has been so good, he has rent my heart with kindness.—He has forgiven all, and by the means your friend's benevolence has afforded me, we shall leave town to-morrow. I come to ask permission to take my leave of you in the morning when I shall be more composed, and better able to express my gratitude.

(MARIA comes down.)

Julia. Your reconciliation with your father makes us too happy to wish for other thanks—if, however, it wou'd not be painful to you, we only ask to know, as you permitted the man, who has so wrong'd your father, to conduct you here—why did he not remain to share the pleasures you now experience?

Aurelia. He conduct me to my parent—O no, it was from him I fled—The generosity of a gentleman who seem'd to know him, protected me from his pursuit. I hoped he wou'd have staid to have seen my father.

Maria. You do not, cannot, mean the gentleman whom we have seen here.

Aurelia. I am sorry I cannot obtain so little of your good opinion as to persuade you to believe me.

Julia. Pardon us a moment, your lover's name is _____?

Aurelia. Frederick Fervid.

Julia.

Julia. And it was with Frederick Fervid with whom I saw you.

Aurelia. Oh, no, indeed it was not.

Maria. Who was the Gentleman?

Aurelia. I know not, nor did I ever see him before.

Maria. Julia, I am unwell—I cannot comprehend this, I am fearful, Miss Goulding, that more than you have been deceiv'd. In the morning we shall be glad to see you.—Your Father has our address—O Julia, if there is the least probability of my Frederick's being wrong'd, it will set right more in this little bosom, than I shou'd wish him at present to be aware of.

[*Exeunt JULIA and MARIA.*]

Aurelia. How cautious shou'd women of the least deviation from the paths of right. No repentance, however severe, can guard the fall'n from suspicion; whatever her feelings, she who has once err'd, is thought capable of repetition—Opinion, jaundic'd o'er by prejudice, pursues her to the grave, while her only remaining consolation is—She has a friend beyond it.

[*Exit.*]

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

ACT

ACT III.

SCENE I—*An Apartment at the Officers. A Table, Chairs. A Back Gammon Board, &c. George discovered sitting..*

Boy Enters.

Boy.

SIR, the Gentleman about the watch will be here directly.

George. Hark ye, you Limb of a Lawyer's Lacquey, tell your master, if he don't carry me to a Magistrate directly, that I may be instantly discharged, I'll make such an example of him that——

Boy. Lord, Sir, you'll soon be had up—they're only waiting till the Gemman that have been lately robb'd, come to look at you, that's all.

George. Get out of the house you little rascal—*(kicks him off)* Darnme, but I shall lose all patience, I can't for shame send from this place to Sir Matthew's; what the devil shall I do? *(Rings a bell violently.)*

Enter OFFICER.

Officer. Don't be impatient, Sir; the Gemman's on the Stairs; I say, you'd better down with a little of the bitt here than be had up, you know; I'll manage matters so that he shan't swear to you.

George.

George. And do you really think me a Highway-man?

Officer. Why, look at your dress—Do you think Gentlemen wears them there sort of colour'd silk handkerchiefs? No, no, I know better than that there too—Oh! here the Gemman is.

Enter HARRY HASTINGS.

(GEORGE turns up the stage.

Hastings. A likely youth, but not the man who robb'd me. Eh! What! Can it be possible? George Fervid, my old school-fellow and acquaintance in custody! They us'd to call me a deep one at College; but, thank heaven, I hav'n't gone quite so far as this—been a bad lad too—well, won't you speak to me, George? hang it, I am vexed; it would be an awkward thing for your family if any thing shou'd happen at the Old Bailey; but hope the best—things may turn out better than you expect; and perhaps, I shall have the happiness to wish you joy of only being transported.

George. Mr. Hastings, I beg your pardon, but this is no such laughable matter, I gave that Gentleman sufficient warning of his error, which he chose to fight.

Hastings. Eh! why Officer this is not the person you suppose; as you have been in the wrong, I'd have you endeavour to make matters up, for my Friend here when once offended is the very devil.

Officer. I'm sure, Sir, it was'nt any fault of mine that he's innocent. The Printer that charged me with him must pay the smart—not I. I know his Honour's very angry, tho', and I dare say, if I was in his power at this moment—

George. If you were, Sir, I should certainly forgive you; when the effects of an injury cease, it's a hard matter for me to remember the cause of it, so go along you rogue, and hark ye (*mimicking*) "you had better come down a little before you're had up, you

you know ; I'm sure you're no Gentleman by your colour'd silk handkerchief ;" go, get you gone ; make a resolution to be more cautious in future, and be sure to keep it when you've made it. *[Exit Officer.]*

Hastings. Is the report true, George, that you and your brother have been so fortunate ?

George. We *have* been fortunate : Our fortune is, however, but a day old ; and mine has seen such twists and turns already, that one year's experience at the same rate will satisfy me for life.

(Hastings sits carelessly at the table, and occasionally plays with the dice.)

Hastings. The life of a young Fellow, like you or me, George, is ever liable to change—the dice-box in my hand doesn't produce more variety of extraordinary chances.

George. And nothing *can* be more extraordinary than to see a Lad of Fashion, of your age, preaching a sermon over a dice-box.

Hastings. It is a text which, if properly studied by Lads of Fashion, wou'd save many an aching heart, and preserve the cheeks of many a Beauty from tears of unavailing remorse. *(Throws a Die.)*

George. Well said, Harry, you preach and practice at the same time.

Hastings. You see how we should avoid the touch of these mischievous engines ; there is poison in the very sight of them.

George. Not when a man makes good resolutions. Gaming is what I abhor—there is no merit in my abstinence from it, because when a man has enough, why need he run the hazard of losing it, to get more ?

(Takes the Box as he talks.)

Hastings. True, there is nothing more absurd.

George. And the man who already has but little, wou'd be doubly blameable to expose that little to the risk of loss.

Hastings (takes the box.) The truth of your observation is obvious.

D

George.

George. Avarice, therefore, being the sole principle on which—you couldn't make that throw again.

Hastings (cursively.) Oh! yes, I might.

George. Not easily, I believe.

Hastings. There! *(throws)*.

George. That's extraordinary; those dice must be loaded to a certainty.

Hastings. I fancy not.

George. Now only observe. I'll repeat the same throw.

Hastings. You don't for Fifty.

George. Done.

Hastings. Done!

George (throws.) You've lost. Come, I don't want your money, I only joked.

Hastings. No! I never take back a bet I lose; I'll throw it again. Double or quits.

George. O, you would lose—it would be impossible for such a chance to occur so often.

Hastings. I wish it was a Thousand instead of Fifty.

George. I'll bet you a Thousand, to punish you.

Hastings (throws). Done!—Huzza! the day's my own—won a Thousand Pounds!

George. So, so—why, this is all a trick. What is the meaning of this, Mr. Hastings.

Hastings. Merely to try the strength of your resolution. 'Tis good experience which you ought to pay for—You can well afford it, and will have reason to thank me for impressing on your memory this lesson, that the man who ostentatiously tempts too far the edge of a precipice is in danger of turning giddy, and paying dear for his presumption.

George (gives notes.) There, Sir, I richly deserve to pay it. This is the fruit of another broken resolution; but if ever again I venture.

Hastings. Hold! to prevent breaking your resolution in future, don't make any; and, to convince you that I would not take advantage of your weakness,

ness, I will only borrow this sum of you—I have occasion for it, and will give you my note.

George. By no means: Your generosity entitles you to receive it now, as much as my own folly makes me merit the loss of it.

Hastings. I'll thank you another time; and, to change the subject, permit me to ask your mediation with an old friend of yours. I have taken the liberty, on the strength of our former friendship, to make use of his name; and, if—

George. What, some security, I suppose. Well, never mind—the money in your hand will now enable you.

Hastings. You're on the wrong scent. But to be brief: In coming from Oxford to London, three months since, I was thrown from my horse; was receiv'd, nursed, and entertained at the house of a poor old man, whose name is Goulding: I remember the treatment with regret, and shou'd have done with pleasure—but he had a daughter.

George. So, so; Harry Hastings in love—I have made a resolution.

Hastings. Which you'll certainly break—so—no more of it, Aurelia gave me reason to believe I had no cause for despair—I couldn't resist the attractions of so interesting a Girl—and—~~it was~~—a damn'd foolish business, but ha! ha! ha—I—I—

George. You ruined the Girl!

Hastings. Why to be sure I talk'd of marriage to her—She was inexperienced—and I—

George. An ungrateful monster! Her Father receiv'd you when helpless, and in need of his assistance, and you—Curse me if I wouldn't sooner throw my Five Thousand a Year to the Devil, or even into the hands of the Lawyers again sooner than have such a crime to answer for.

Hastings. I can't blame your warmth, but you must hear the whole.

George. Is there any addition, then?—Well, so
you.

you promis'd her Marriage ?—I'm witness of that, and if it will be of any service to the poor Girl, I'll take my oath of it.

Hastings. It won't be of any service to her because—

George. Because what ?

Hastings. The promise was made to her under another name.

George. Under another name.

Hastings. Now pray, pray be patient ; I was at the moment rather fearful of being arrested, and from the hurt I receiv'd in my fall, being likely to remain there some time, I took without any other design, the name of a friend—Of course in my amour it was so continued—The Girl came with me to Town—I won't trouble you with particulars, but, three days since, she found means to escape from me—To-day I saw her by accident. The Brother Frederick whom I had just met at her own desire protected her to a house where I have since learnt her Father, who came to London in search of her, resides.

George. Harry, you're a curiosity—and I dare say the whole collection of Rogues who visit these apartments were never so completely eclips'd as they are at this moment in your person.

Hastings. The loss of your money, I see has vex'd you : but who can help being a little giddy in a world that's always running round—you yourself might.

George. Me!—no Sir.—I shou'd never be able to look up again were I capable of returning hospitality with ingratitude, of murdering the comfort of a benevolent man, destroying the reputation of his child, and then meanly shrouding the villainy of the action under the name of a man of honour.

Hastings. I fancy by your warmth, you have made a resolution never to be out of temper. I fear I have said too much, Sir. But I thought your friendship for me sufficient to make you my advocate, with your Brother Frederick.

George.

George. My Brother Frederick!

Hastings. Just so, Sir.

George. Very good, Sir—He shall immediately—
No—he's too good to oppose his life against that of
a viper—I am a harum scarum sort of a somebody,
that no-body cares two-pence for; therefore I will
—yes I will—Hark ye, Sir, I had made a most ri-
gid determination never to fight a duel—nothing but
the atrocity of this circumstance cou'd have induced
me to break it—So meet me this evening, meet me
in the Park at six: I shall think it an honour to rid
the world of such a monster.

Hastings. As you please, Sir.

George. But if I fall, I bequeath the cause to my
Brother—Should *he* fail, Old Truepenny shall have
a touch at you, and if there is a grain of spirit in
the bosom of Sir Matthew Maxim: it shall entitle
him to the honors of a reversion in his favour—here
Officer!

Enter OFFICER.

Take me in custody again, or else that man, who has
dare'd to call me his Friend. Don't let us be both
at large, for if we are, I shall certainly be tempted
to a violation of the law—and tho' but for an act
of justice, visit the old Baily in reality.

*[Exit with the OFFICER,
HASTINGS following.]*

SCENE II—*An Apartment at Sir Matthew's.**Enter* LADY MAXIM.

Lady Maxim. So, in spite of my prohibition, Maria has chosen to go, and satisfy herself of Frederick's falsehood, by being convinced she will meet sufficient punishment. To-morrow she shall go out of town; and as for the base deceiver, Frederick—Heavens! he's here.

Enter FREDERICK.

Madam, it is with some difficulty I have prevailed on myself, after what has pass'd, to enter into any explanation at all: but—

Lady Maxim. Mr. Frederick, you may spare your excuses. The fact once admitted, renders further elucidation quite unnecessary.

Fred. But, Madam, the fact is *not* admitted, Maria and Lady Julia are deceived. It is in my power to convince them of it; but they wou'dn't hear a word. You, from your years and experience—

Lady Maxim. Sir! Years and experience!—must you add insult to infamy? Not content with basely deceiving one amiable woman, must your malevolence be directed to another? Were Sir Matthew present, you wou'd not with impunity take such liberties.

Fred. 'Sdeath, I am always touching the wrong string—Pardon me, Madam—my anxiety to clear up this affair is so great, that on my knees I beseech you to hear me.

Lady Maxim. You're a bad man; a vile seducer—and if you kneel to me, I don't know what may be the consequence.

Fred.

Fred. I flatter myself, you've too kind a heart to wish to do injustice to one, whose gratitude, by a mere act of equity, you may secure for ever.

Lady Maxim. "My heart," as the Poet says, is indeed made of penetrable stuff, and for that reason I dare not listen to you.

Fred. You must, you shall, my dearest Lady Mary.

(*kneeling again.*)

Enter SIR MATTHEW.

Sir Matt. Hey dey, Mr. Frederick! Can't you confine your wicked gallantries to Parson's daughters, but you must even assail the virtue of Lady Mary? Why, Sir, if you go on at this rate, your fortune won't last you a twelvemonth. It will be all dealt out in damages, and old Truepenny will have rescued it from Chancery, to have the mortification of seeing you throw it into Doctors Commons.

Fred. Sir, my Honour is not to be thus trifled with.

Sir Matt. And, my Honour, Mr. Frederick.

Lady Maxim. And for Heaven's sake, consider my Honour. The slightest breath can taint the reputation of a Female; and should you intend fighting upon this occasion——

Sir Matt. I don't—make yourself easy—I never intended any thing like it.

Lady Maxim. Honour, my dear Sir Matthew, has irresistible claims; and though you may disguise it from me——yet should I be left a disconsolate widow——

Sir Matt. Don't terrify yourself, my Lady—I wouldn't have such a thing happen for the universe: I have too great a regard for you.

Fred. Lady Mary, you need be under no great apprehensions: We are all mistaking each other—and if Sir Matthew will meet me in the Park in half an hour, I can in an honorable way regain your good opinion;

opinion; which, should you refuse me this opportunity, I shall conceive of too little consequence to be equal to the trouble of further solicitation. *[Exit.]*

Lady Maxim. Sir Matthew, you'll go—

Sir Matt. Eh!—Yes, if you absolutely think it necessary, my Lady.

Lady Maxim. Certainly it is—And do I not speak from the most disinterested motives?—My honour will be sure to suffer, I shall become the conversation of the whole town—The newspapers will be full of nothing else. The innocent cause of a duel is certain to incur blame, while you, conquering or conquer'd, will be immortalized—and so dear to me, is your reputation, that I had rather have you envied and lamented for falling in the cause of beauty, than live to be thought unworthy of the hand and heart you so entirely possess. *[Exit.]*

Sir Matt. And I'd rather live without that hand and heart, than fall in the cause of any such damn'd nonsense—He don't mean to fight any more than I do, or he wouldn't have named his time and place before a lady, so egad, I'll go—but if he should be serious?—why, can't I inform against myself at the justice's—it is but giving good security to keep the peace, and I'm sure if they knew my intentions on the subject they wouldn't ask for any better.

Enter TRUEPENNY and GEORGE.

Ah, Mr. Truepenny, I'm glad to see you, and you, and you too, Sir notwithstanding the fracas I have had with your brother.

George. My brother, Sir, is fully exonerated from what has been erroneously laid to his charge. He has now but one enemy left, between ourselves, I think him too contemptible for Frederick's notice—I therefore mean to stand in Frederick's shoes, and meet his antagonist in the park this evening myself.

Sir Matt. [Aside.] Indeed! bless me!—but—that antagonist is me, I suppose.

True.

True. I see the ladies in the next room, I'll go and acquaint them with all that relates to Frederick's vindication, while you tell the story to Sir Matthew.

Sir Matt. Nay, but you needn't go—don't be in a hurry—I—

True. But I *am* in a hurry, and I *will* be in a hurry—when a story is to be told to the disadvantage of a fellow creature *calumny* is swift as lightening, what then shou'd be the speed of a friend who has the delightful power of rescuing from unmerited imputation a worthy character, and placing the virtues of an honest man far from the reach of scandalous detraction.— [Exit.]

George. Sir Matthew, I have something to say to you ; there is a sort of appointment, which I must keep this evening. I shou'dn't have breathed a syllable of it to mortal, but as it in some measure materially concerns you.

Sir Matt. Why yes, of course it does, and if you hadn't known it, I shou'd have spoke to Mr. Truepenny on the subject, he might have prevented matters from being so desperate.

George. Mr. Truepenny, Sir, is engaged as my second ; my only request is, that shou'd I fall—

Sir Matt. Now pray don't talk of it—I shou'd be sorry for that—I shou'd indeed, and as Frederick is not to fight himself, where is the necessity of your undertaking his quarrel.

George. It cannot be dispensed with, Sir, I am grateful for your apprehensions on my account, and tho' I know you wou'd much rather my *opponent* shou'd be the sacrifice in so just a cause—yet—

Sir Matt. Sir, I don't wish any such thing—nor do I think I am bound to listen to you at all—I believe my lady is beckoning me—Egad, I'll endeavour to make Julia persuade him to lay aside his terrible intentions, and if he is so very fond of park excursions that he won't relinquish the idea, why he shall have all the sport to himself, for curse me
if

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is gone within a mile of the Place, if I can help it. —

[Exit.]

George. What the devil's the matter with Sir Matthew, after all I shou'd care if this evening's appointment were all over—it's a cursed awkward situation to a man of any feeling, when he has to reflect that a few hours may terminate an existence, the principal hope of which rests upon the savage idea of destroying a brother mortal—I don't know whether the bare thought isn't as bad as being lock'd up in that horrid place which I have just left.

Enter JULIA.

Julia. (Apart.) 'Tis a curious errand on which, Sir Matthew has deputed me; the office of a peace-maker, is however so truly honourable, that where it's endeavours succeed, there is scarce any blessing beyond it.

George. Lady Julia, your most obedient; I hope my friend has by this time convinced you, that I am the brother of at least an honest man.

Julia. His wishes to that effect have perfectly succeeded, Sir, I shall be happy, if I may be as fortunate as to convince the brother of that honest man, that he is in error himself.

George. Why Madam, I cannot say, I ever search'd very minutely into the causes of the little absurdities I am to be guilty of, but this I will say, that in my journey through life, I never seriously meant ill to mortal, and if ever my good intentions have run away with me into a wrong path, it has been more through my want of skill in holding the reins, than from any wish to injure my fellow-travellers on the road.

Julia. You are going to fight a duel?

George. Who? I, Madam.

Julia. I know it, Sir, and I have authority to say from your antagonist, he had much rather shake hands with

with you. He owes you no enmity, nor do I see why you ought to owe him any.

George. In defence of a friend, of a brother, Madam, surely we may be allowed a little warmth.

Julia. But while you intended to fight for the honour of your brother, you should also have thought how many beings your conduct may make unhappy, had you a wife for instance.

George. Eh!—a wife?

Julia. Ay, supposing you were married—

George. Married! why that's only pointing out one awkward situation, by supposing me in another.

Julia. Nay, why do you speak disrespectfully of a state you are unacquainted with, does that proceed from good intentions?

George. Why no—It's a subject with regard to which I never had any intention at all.

Julia. You were never in love then?

George. Not that I knew at the time, I believe, for I don't immediately recollect it.

Julia. You have perhaps at least been cautious in that particular?

George. Not very—I was to have been in love once, but I fancy it was put off.

Julia. Indeed! Till when?

George. Till I meet with somebody, who in the first place must be very like you.

Julia. What to tell you of your faults?—

George. That I shou'd prize her for:—but she must also have a qualification far more difficult to find—she must endure to be told of her own.

Julia. And all this before marriage—I see you are no Judge, this is beginning at the wrong end—Lovers are less sincere, they never mention faults on either side

George. Or rather they don't see them, now the first proof I give to the woman I may chuse of my affection shall be to tell her what I don't like, as the most impressive mode of fixing in her memory what I do.

Julia. She wou'd forget it the next minute.

George.

George. I don't think so—were it *flattery*, she might, the dear creatures are so us'd to it, but point out a defect to a pretty woman, and it sticks in her throat for a month.

Julia. Let us suppose then for argument sake that you were in love with me—nay, don't be alarm'd—I only imagine it.

George. Aye, but the pleasures of imagination are very seductive.

Julia. Well then, supposing it really the case, as the first proof of your *sincere regard*, what fault would you find in me.

George. Upon my soul I don't think I cou'd discover any.

(*TRUEPENNY and SIR MATTHEW enter unperceiv'd by GEORGE.*)

Julia. No!—What nothing to dislike.

George. Not an atom—the more I look at you, the more I like you, and may I be deceiv'd in woman if I don't think you a very charming creature.

Julia. Oh, Fie!

George. I am in earnest—I am indeed! I tried to find fault with you when I was here before, but found it impossible—Mind, I don't say you have no faults, you have perhaps only the art of hiding them from me, and that——

Truepenny (coming forward). And that alone is sufficient to testify to whom it may concern, that George Pervid, a very promising youth, has fall'n in love, broke his last resolution, and yielded to every temptation as easily as he vowed to overcome it.

George. I beg pardon, there is one, I have yet in my power to keep.—I said I would never fight a duel.

Sir Matt. And that's a resolution I'd advise you to keep by all means.

George.

George. Mr. Truepenny, I have reason to think I shall meet an apology instead of a pistol—we will, therefore, if you please, adjourn to the spot directly, the Gentleman perhaps may be impatient.

Sir Matt. Me ! Oh dear, no—I'm by no means impatient.

True. You ! why who said you were the man ?

Sir Matt. Why you and Mr. George there—You said you stood in Frederick's shoes at six o'clock in the Park, and as I had been invited by Frederick at that time and place, why——

George. And was it you who sent Lady Julia ?—here's another damn'd mistake.—Truepenny, follow me—I've been deceived, till the time is nearly elapsed, I shall have my courage call'd in question—(going)—is stopped by Julia.

Julia. Then after all my advice has no influence over you.

George. Your advice was a fault, which shou'd I be dishonour'd, nothing cou'd repair. (*Rushes out.*)

True. Sir Matthew, come with me ; you needn't fear, there shall be no bloodshed.

Sir Matt. Well, if you really think so, I will—but we had better wait for the ladies—They will assist to keep us all friends. (*Exit, forced off by Truepenny.*)

Enter LADY MAXIM and MARIA:

Lady Maxim. Is he really gone then ? Heaven's, what a situation ! what terrible suspense !—Shou'd Sir Matthew be the victim.

Julia. Dear Madam, there is no danger, I hope ; Sir Matthew, I am sure, wou'dn't be displeased if we were to follow him.

Lady Maxim. Reach me a chair, girls, do you suppose I cou'd endure to see the awful ceremony, the solemn sacrifice of propriety to a point of honour ; if you had either of you any feeling, the bare idea wou'd affect you as—(sitting down)—as it now does

E

me—

me—to see the consistency of true politeness, to see one brave man shaking hands with another at whom he is just going to shoot.

Maria. Heavens!

Lady Maxim. The ground exactly measur'd.

Julia. Let us hasten.

Lady Maxim. The weapons charg'd.

Maria. For mercy's sake.

Lady Maxim—(rising with gravity and taking an attitude). The dreadful pause—the signal given!

Maria and Julia. Pray, Madam, come.

Lady Maxim. And now they fire!—*(A pistol is fired without)—they scream—Lady Maxim falls into her chair again—Maria supports herself on the back of it—a second pistol fir'd which rouses them.*

Julia. Who waits?

Enter a Clownish Footman.

For Heaven's sake, what's the matter? who fir'd those pistols?

Servant. Oh! what! the pistols, my Leady, dauntsee be frighten'd, 'twas only I—

Lady Maxim. You, and how dare you?

Servant. My Master, Sir Matthew, desired me.

Lady Maxim. What, to terrify me?

Servant. Noa, my Leady, to fire off his pistols, because he said ha zhou'd ha noa occasion an un.

Lady Maxim. No occasion!

Maria. Thank Heaven!

Lady Maxim. Thank Heaven indeed! have I then sham'd myself in this manner for "no occasion."—Let them send the carriage to the door directly.—*(Exit Servant)*—And if Sir Matthew has been guilty of the least submission, he shall apologize to me upon the spot for his meanness.—Come, Ladies, and bear testimony,

testimony, there's nothing I detest more in a man than want of spirit. Oh! I'll humble him for this.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE III—*The Park.*

Enter FREDERICK and HASTINGS.

Fred. By having made amends to Mr. Goulding and his daughter, you amply are entitled to congratulation rather than reproach from me; as for George, he of course will listen to reason: the same spirit of generosity which induced him to call you out as an enemy, will doubly persuade him to accept your hand as a friend.

Hastings. 'Tis about the time; by his impetuosity I expected he would have been here before me.

George (without). Come along, old Truepenny.

Fred. You may tell he is aware of his neglect, for he has fairly distanc'd his second.

Enter GEORGE.

George. Mr. Hastings, I beg pardon for making you wait; I have been detain'd by an accident—*Frederick*, how came I to find you here?

Fred. In the first place, *George*, I thank you most cordially for so readily and heartily adopting the cause of your Brother, and as your friend, be assured he will never, never forget it. In the next place, you must shake hands with *Harry* here, who has in my

presence been married to Aurelia, and settled the thousand pounds on her.

George. Which I'll double—I can be as warm a friend, Harry, as I may have appear'd a hasty adversary, and be assured, though it certainly rather tickled my vanity to start up in defence of a fine woman—yet I feel infinitely more satisfaction, in seeing you restor'd to reason, without running the risk of having a bullet in your brains.

Hastings. Between young fellows of our age, thanks are best express'd by actions—only let me find an opportunity of undertaking your cause, as warmly as you have done that of your Brother, and my Aurelia; and may I never shake a friend by the hand again, if I don't fight like a game-cock for you.

Enter TRUEPENNY and SIR MATTHEW.

True. I say you shan't fight—I hate fighting, and I'll shoot the first man who dares to fire a pistol.

Sir Matt. (aside) Then I shall be safe to a certainty.

Fred. You may spare your powder then—(*Enter GOULDING and AURELIA*)—for here come two reasons, why our quarrels are at an end.

Hastings introduces Goulding and Aurelia to Frederick, George, and Truempenny, in dumb show.

George (to Harry). Your Father-in-law, I presume—I had hoped the pleasure of seeing you this morning, Mr. Goulding, but I contriv'd to go such a cursed round-about way, that it's a wonder we have met even now.

Goulding. Mr. Hastings has inform'd me, how much we are indebted to you—the acknowledgments of an old man may be tiresome, but my daughter shall join in assuring you of their sincerity.

Aurelia. Some hours since, I thought the world a very

very bad one, nor can I express my feelings better than by saying, you have contributed most kindly towards a total change in my opinion.

George. My friend Harry, has I hope, had a share in convincing you, and never will produce an argument against your present way of thinking.

Enter Lady MAXIM, JULIA and MARIA.

Sir Matthew. Well, my Lady, we're all happy and reconciled, and going to be married.

Lady Maxim. Sir Matthew, I hope you have done nothing derogatory to our mutual honour—if you have——

Sir Matthew. Me!—I haven't open'd my lips—it was all settled before I came up.

Lady Maxim. Mr. Truepenny, I shall look to you for a statement of the whole affair.

True. Then walk this way, my Lady. Sir Matthew's share in the transaction will be told in a very few words.

(They go up.)

(FREDERICK, MARIA, and AURELIA, come forward.)

Aurelia. To my thanks for your goodness, Madam, let me add sincere regret for having been the innocent cause of uneasiness to yourself, and this Gentleman.

Maria. I am rather indebted to you for teaching me how much nearer to my heart he was than I imagin'd, the wrong you have sustained demands all the reparation I can make—*(to Frederick,)* and be assured,

assured, I never felt more true affection for you than at the moment I appeared most angry.

Fred. So kind a declaration leaves me more in your debt than life will have time to cancel.

(*JULIA and GEORGE come forward.*)

Julia. To leave me with so much rudeness too—you even said it was a fault to give you good advice.

George. Which proves I am in love upon my own system—I told you I shou'd be sure to find fault where I admired—and if you will but permit me to love you as much as I begin to find I shall.—

Julia. You would discover so many faults, that your sincerity wou'd get the better of your passion.

George. Allow me but sincerity for its basis, and you commit a fault in not list'ning to my suit.

(*SIR MATTHEW, LADY MARY, and TRUFFENH, come forward.*)

Sir Matthew. There now, my Lady, I hope you are satisfied, it was all a mistake.

Lady Maxim. I am indeed, Sir Matthew, for I expected you wou'd have fought like a Hero.

Sir Matthew. Why as to that—it's Maxim with me, that a man ought never to fight without very urgent occasion—the occasion, my Lady, shou'd be so very urgent, that in fact, I don't see any occasion there can be to fight at all.

Truf. And now as I foresee we shall have three weddings in one day, we'll adjourn to Sir Matthew's, prevail on my Lady, to let us be merry; and Mr. Gossling to officiate in his Canonicals.

George.

George. The Ladies have yet to assent to the proposal—Frederick and I have perhaps, little but our fortunes to recommend us, we must therefore rest our hopes of approbation on the flattering idea, that few of our friends will have any serious objection to FIVE THOUSAND A YEAR.

F I N I S.

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